

Where to Get Help

The best way to continue driving safely is to work with your doctor. Your doctor can help you decide what steps you need to take to remain safe on the road. By working with your doctor you can, for example, adjust your medications so that you are less drowsy if that has been a problem. In addition, your doctor can also refer you to an occupational therapist or driving rehabilitation specialist. These professionals are trained to help you continue driving safely and can assist you in attaining equipment modifications for your car if needed.

For more information, visit:

www.bot.ca.gov

www.dmv.ca.gov

www.eldersafety.org

or call your doctor.

Portions adapted from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's, "Safe Driving for Older Adults" Brochure, the American Medical Association's "Physician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers," and the Older California Traffic Safety Task Force's "Red Flags" document.



You are a good driver...

...but as you age you may begin to experience functional changes or medical conditions that can affect your ability to drive safely. The good news is that by carefully monitoring any changes, such as your vision or reflexes, and by working with your doctor, you have the ability to change your driving habits or take other corrective steps that allow you to stay safe on the road.



Tips for Safety Behind the Wheel

A guide to good health and safe driving.



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Signs to Look For



Vision

How is your eyesight? The ability to read street signs and see the road clearly is an important part of driving safely. If you have trouble with the following activities, talk to your eye doctor and make sure your eyeglass or contact lens prescription is current:

- ◆ Reading signs easily.
- ◆ Clearly seeing street markings, cars and people, especially at dawn, dusk, or when it's foggy or rainy.
- ◆ Handling headlight glare at night.



Control of The Car

Your coordination, strength, and flexibility may lessen as you age and make driving a car more difficult. If you have trouble doing the following tasks you should check with your doctor about fitness programs, strengthening exercises, and a possible evaluation by a health care professional.

- ◆ Looking over your shoulder for lane changes.
- ◆ Moving your foot from the gas pedal to the brake, and back.
- ◆ Turning the steering wheel.
- ◆ Sitting in your car for extended periods of time.



Illness, Attacks, and Chronic Conditions

An acute illness – for example, a stroke – or an on-going illness such as arthritis or multiple sclerosis can make driving more challenging. It is very important that any physical or mental conditions be discussed with a health care provider so that you can learn how to continue to be a safe driver. If you have experienced any illness or changes in your mental or physical abilities, such as those listed below, ask your doctor about them.

- ◆ Recent hospitalization or long illness that results in making you weak.
- ◆ Dizziness or loss of coordination.
- ◆ Seizures, fainting, or other loss of consciousness.



Medications

- ◆ Any vision problems.
- ◆ Any mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, or memory loss.

Often the medications you take can make you drowsy, confused, or nervous. If you experience any of the following symptoms when driving, talk to your doctor, you may be experiencing side effects from your medications:

- ◆ You feel sleepy or confused.
- ◆ You're reacting slowly.
- ◆ You feel dizzy.

